

~~SECRET~~

Approved For Release 2004/06/24 : CIA-RDP79-00927A000300030001-7

COPY NO. 13

CONFIDENTIAL

OCI NO. 5713

14 May 1954

ED

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY



DOCUMENT NO. 3
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☐
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S 01989 25X1
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 7-25-79
AUTHORITY: 7-25-79 REVIEWER:

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

~~SECRET~~

RETURN TO ARCHIVES & RECORDS CENTER
IMMEDIATELY AFTER USE
JOB 797927 BOX 3

CONFIDENTIAL

228507

State Dept. review completed

Approved For Release 2004/06/24 : CIA-RDP79-00927A000300030001-7

THIS MATERIAL CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECT-
ING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES
WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE LAWS,
TITLE 18, USC, SECTIONS 793 AND 794, THE TRANSMIS-
SION OR REVELATION OF WHICH IN ANY MANNER TO
AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW.

The Current Intelligence Weekly has been prepared prima-
rily for the internal use of the Central Intelligence Agency.
It does not represent a complete coverage of all current
situations. Comments and conclusions represent the im-
mediate appraisal of the Office of Current Intelligence.

~~SECRET~~

14 May 54

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

THE SOVIET WORLD Page 4

VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT PARALYZED Page 6

The Vietnamese government of Bao Dai, competing at Geneva with the self-confident and highly organized regime of Ho Chi Minh, is split and virtually unable to function. Ten cabinet ministers are in Europe and the two senior members of the government still in Saigon are at loggerheads.

SIGNS OF IMPENDING CRISIS IN WEST GERMANY'S FOREIGN POLICY Page 8

Belief in EDC is fading in West Germany, and public sentiment in favor of ending the occupation is rising. The Bonn government may be forced to renounce present policies if the French Assembly adjourns for the summer without ratifying the Bonn and Paris treaties.

JAPAN MOVING TOWARD CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE ORBIT. . . Page 10

Recent Japanese moves indicate a trend toward closer relations with the Communist world. There is evidence of broad political support for the establishment of working arrangements and eventually of diplomatic relations with the Soviet bloc.

SOVIET BLOC INCREASING PROCUREMENT OF MERCHANT SHIPPING FROM WEST Page 12

The Soviet bloc is achieving marked success in its effort to expand its merchant fleet by contracting for construction of ships in Western yards.

25X6

~~SECRET~~

LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS RENEW CONFLICTS AMONG SOUTH KOREAN
CONSERVATIVES Page 16

The campaign for the 20 May South Korean National Assembly election is leading to a renewal of the old conflict between President Rhee and his conservative opposition. The president's control of the political situation is likely to result for the first time in a clear pro-Rhee majority in the new assembly.

SOVIET PROPAGANDA GIVES INCREASED ATTENTION TO NUCLEAR
SUBJECTS Page 17

The recent emphasis of Orbit propaganda on atomic and hydrogen subjects apparently is designed to stress Soviet nuclear retaliatory capabilities, to maximize the impact of Soviet disarmament proposals, and to make it politically difficult for the United States to initiate the use of nuclear weapons in a future war.

SPECIAL ARTICLE. COMMUNISTS PUSH ARAB "UNITED FRONT". . Page 19

The Arab Communist parties are becoming increasingly effective as catalysts of discontent and anti-Westernism, largely as the result of the return from Moscow in late 1953 of Khalid Bakdash, the leading Communist in the Arab world.

14 May 54

THE SOVIET WORLD

The Communist delegations opened the Indochina phase of the Geneva conference with a strong bid to extend the negotiations to include Laos and Cambodia, as well as Vietnam. As the first step in this tactic, the Viet Minh vice president devoted virtually his entire opening speech to a plea for invitations to the "resistance governments" of Laos and Cambodia. Chou En-lai supported this proposal, holding that the conference had the right to determine its own composition, and Molotov followed with the allegation that these "governments" controlled much of the territory of the two countries.

In the second session on Indochina, the Viet Minh spokesman rejected the French proposal for halting the war and put forward a plan calling for a cease-fire throughout Indochina to be followed by a general political settlement which would include the following major points: (a) French recognition of the sovereignty and independence of the "Democratic Republic of Vietnam," Khmer (Cambodia), and Pathet Lao (Laos); (b) eventual withdrawal of all "foreign troops" from the three states; (c) formation of advisory committees to carry out elections; and (d) the establishment of unified governments in all three states.

These terms probably represent the Communists' maximum demands for a political settlement and were advanced primarily for the record and for use as a bargaining counter. The Viet Minh proposal concluded, however, with a provision which appeared to be designed to keep the door open for serious cease-fire negotiations. It suggested that a cease-fire might be arranged without complete agreement on the shape of a political settlement and included a provision vaguely resembling Bidault's demand for the grouping of regular units in zones of assembly. This approach is consistent with other indications that the Communists are seeking to induce France to accept a simple cease-fire agreement without political guarantees. Such an arrangement would leave the Viet Minh in the most advantageous position to continue infiltration into Laos, Cambodia and non-Communist areas of Vietnam, and would also reduce the risk of possible American or United Nations intervention.

Foreign Minister Molotov, in a conversation on 5 May, agreed with British foreign secretary Eden that the Indochina situation was inflammable, and that an armistice should be sought. He did not dissent from Eden's suggestion that political and economic problems should not be discussed until after an armistice with satisfactory safeguards had been arranged.

Moscow's unqualified adherence to the constitutions of UNESCO and the International Labor Organization on 21 and 26 April respectively are the latest moves to expand Soviet activities in UN specialized agencies and subsidiary programs. The USSR removed the restrictions on its technical assistance contribution in March, thus leaving the dissemination of assistance funds to the discretion of the UN Technical Assistance program.

These cooperative gestures toward subsidiary UN programs may foreshadow Soviet participation in other specialized agencies such as the World Health Organization and possibly the Food and Agriculture Organization. Moscow may be motivated by a desire for a voice in these agencies, all of which participate in the Technical Assistance program and use Technical Assistance funds.

The Soviet celebration on the anniversary of V-E Day was distinguished by a number of articles of top military leaders which reflected the current Soviet propaganda lines as enunciated by Malenkov and Khrushchev at the recent Supreme Soviet. Except for Zhukov's brief recognition of the Allied role in the war the articles were truculent and boastful in tone, emphasizing the party's contribution to victory, Soviet armed strength and the collapse of capitalism in the event of any future war. Marshal Zhukov's tribute to the leadership of General Eisenhower and Field Marshal Montgomery fits into the recent propaganda pattern of simultaneously appealing to the West with implications of peaceful intent while making abundantly clear the alleged threat to peace arising from an "aggressive" US foreign policy.

~~SECRET~~

14 May 54

VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT PARALYZED

The Vietnamese government of Bao Dai, competing at Geneva with the self-confident and highly organized regime of Ho Chi Minh, is split and virtually unable to function. Bao Dai and two thirds of his ministers are in Europe, while the two senior members of the government still in Saigon are at loggerheads.

The governor of Tonkin flatly asserted on 6 May that Vietnam no longer had a central government. The only solution he saw was for Bao Dai to return at once and take over the premiership. It is doubtful, however, that Bao Dai's active direction of the government, a role he has persistently refused to accept, would remedy the situation at this late date. In any event, Bao Dai had announced two days previously that it was his duty "to remain for some time in Europe to defend Vietnam on the international scale."

The paralysis of the government in Saigon is revealed by the fact that the "war cabinet" established by Bao Dai on 9 April has had but one meeting. This body, whose establishment was announced as a stimulant for the Vietnamese war effort, includes Premier Buu Loc, Defense Minister Quat, and Chief of Staff General Hinh. The latter two have long been at odds.

At this meeting, held shortly after its formation, the war cabinet agreed on a general mobilization order. Four weeks later, on 3 May, Hinh told the American chargé in Saigon that the orders necessary to carry out the decree had remained on Quat's desk. The following day, Quat, who is acting premier and generally regarded as the ablest man in the government, vehemently denied this and charged Hinh with responsibility for holding up mobilization. The premier, who might have mediated between Quat and Hinh, was in Paris. Meanwhile, the chargé noted that the army, conscious of the rivalries between the defense minister and the chief of staff, was steadily deteriorating.

In nonmilitary circles, too, there is dissatisfaction. Minister of Labor Huyen and an associate recently expressed complete disillusionment with the present "totally unrepresentative" government and inquired of American officials in Saigon what the American attitude would be if an attempt were made to set up a "revolutionary government." Huyen felt that the populace in the Viet Minh-held area, though opposed to the Ho regime, would revolt rather than put up with the corruption of the present Bao Dai rulers.

~~SECRET~~

Apart from its anomalous position as an almost but never quite independent regime, a basic weakness of the Vietnam government has been the type of rule exercised by Bao Dai. Refusing all demands for a constitution or assembly that might limit his power, he has delegated authority to mutually hostile subordinates, and then remained aloof from the ensuing confusion. This pattern has been varied by occasional heavy-handed intervention, when he considered a subordinate's strength to be developing too rapidly or when he found it opportune to award a political prize to a favorite.

A striking example of Bao Dai's practice of abrupt and devastating intervention was a decree he issued from France on 1 May, awarding control of the national police to a leader of a paramilitary, quasi-gangster organization which has long exerted extralegal control in Saigon. This organization, known as the Binh Xuyen, controls the most important gambling concessions in Saigon, and has been an important source of funds for Bao Dai. The Binh Xuyen is considered reliably anti-Communist--so long as anti-Communism is profitable--but the American chargé in Saigon reports that its elevation has seriously demoralized the sureté. Rumors are current in Saigon that other Binh Xuyen leaders will be given top government jobs.

The Binh Xuyen affair has exacerbated the conflict between Hinh and Quat. Some 200 sureté officers have left their posts and joined forces with Hinh, taking their security files with them. Hinh hinted broadly to the American chargé on 7 May that he would use these files for political purposes through a military security service which he intends to set up. Quat states that Hinh has in mind a sort of Gestapo, and he is trying to head off the formation of a separate security system.

The present situation, with ten cabinet members in Europe and six in Saigon, appears to be more one of paralysis than of disintegration. There is a suggestion of the latter, however, in the action of the leader of the Cao Dai, a politico-religious sect with considerable strength in South Vietnam, who on 3 May addressed a broadcast to Ho Chi Minh calling for a coalition to oppose the partition of Vietnam. This group has an armed force of some 10,000 that was scheduled for integration into the Vietnam army. The action of the Cao Dai pope has been ascribed to various motives, but the American embassy points out that, whatever the motivation, the effect has been to increase the forces of division and to give impetus to the steadily deteriorating political situation.

~~SECRET~~

14 May 54

SIGNS OF IMPENDING CRISIS IN WEST GERMANY'S FOREIGN POLICY

Belief in EDC is fading in West Germany, and public sentiment in favor of ending the occupation is rising. Chancellor Adenauer's European integration policy is evidently losing support. If before adjourning for the summer the French National Assembly fails to act on EDC and the related contractual agreements which grant the Federal Republic virtual sovereignty, German popular sentiment will probably demand that the two treaties be separated and Allied approval be obtained for the latter alone.

Adenauer has thus far held firmly to his policy of keeping the two treaties joined, since any move now to split them would jeopardize EDC ratification in France. In the 29 April Bundestag debate, however, he had unprecedented difficulty in securing backing for his European integration policies. American officials in Bonn noted that few of Adenauer's followers still believe that EDC and the European Political Community can ever be achieved.

In the last six weeks, the press and even prominent right-wing government leaders have objected with increasing frequency to the linking of EDC with the contractual agreements. These objections cannot be ignored indefinitely by the chancellor and his Christian Democratic Party. The sovereignty question and the government's foreign policy are expected to be the central issues in the state elections this summer and fall. Christian Democratic leaders are convinced that the party will face an uphill fight if Adenauer's policies do not soon produce results.

The most immediate danger seems to be the eruption of a press campaign against the government's stand on foreign affairs if there is no favorable development in France following the Geneva conference. Ambassador Conant in Bonn fears that the chancellor might be compelled some time late this summer to renounce his present policies to save his coalition from early dissolution. There is evidence suggesting that he may then ask the Allies for a public declaration promising German sovereignty as soon as possible.

Theoretically, separation of EDC and the contractals could be accomplished by a simple deletion of a few references to EDC in the key convention of the latter. In fact, however, such action would require parliamentary approval by the signatory governments and would encounter serious difficulties.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

For example, once the question of revision were raised in West Germany, the Bundestag would probably demand either extensive revision of the contractual agreements or the drafting of a new treaty giving Bonn fuller powers than presently planned. West German politicians feel that some of the limitations imposed on their government in the contractals have become outdated in the two years since they were signed.

The French, on the other hand, originally accepted the contractual agreements without controls over West German rearmament only because such controls were indirectly included in the EDC treaty through the provision for multinational control of the European army. Consequently, serious French opposition to implementation of the Bonn treaty could be expected unless explicit controls over German military activities were included.

Since the Bonn government would feel bound to reject such overt restrictions as smacking of Versailles, Adenauer would face serious obstacles in changing his policy of support for European military integration to one of cooperation with the West on a purely national basis. For this reason, and because the defeat of EDC would be likely to end all hope for creating the planned European Political Community, the chancellor will tend to resist domestic pressure for abandoning EDC as long as any chance remains for its realization.

Meanwhile, the growing German doubts about the projected defense and political communities are extending even to the existing Coal and Steel Community (CSC). Important Ruhr industrialists now say that the Federal Republic has tolerated the restrictions of the CSC only because it was considered a steppingstone to European political, military, and economic integration. Chancellor Adenauer declared on 5 May that unless progress is made soon toward European unity, nationalism will burgeon in West Germany. This trend is newly evident in the Social Democratic and Free Democratic Parties, and has become more pronounced in the refugee party with its 8 May change in leadership.

It is apparent that any great increase in German nationalism would set the stage for the gradual decline of Adenauer's power, and the eventual disintegration of his coalition. His capacity to set government policy and to maintain a high degree of cooperation with the Western Allies in this case would be gravely impaired. His party retains an absolute majority in the Bundestag, however, and he probably can retain his office until the next national elections, scheduled for 1957.

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

14 May 54

JAPAN MOVING TOWARD CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE ORBIT

Recent Japanese moves--motivated primarily by economic considerations--indicate a trend toward closer relations with the Communist world. There is evidence of broad political support for the establishment of working arrangements and eventually of diplomatic relations with the Soviet bloc.

In early April, the government shifted its previously passive attitude toward trade with the USSR by drafting a proposal to permit the entry of a limited number of traders. There are also indications that Tokyo will soon allow representatives of Japanese commercial, shipping and fishing interests to visit the Soviet Union. This change in policy is apparently prompted by growing concern over Japan's deteriorating trade situation. It also results from pressure by Japanese business interests, which hope for Soviet guarantees regarding Japanese fishing operations in North Pacific waters, increased orders for ships and ship repairs, and mounting imports of coal, lumber and other raw materials.

Japan's interest in the Chinese Communist mainland as its natural and traditional market and source of raw materials overshadows its interest in Soviet trade. There is increasing popular apprehension that European countries are displacing Japan in the China market because of Tokyo's greater restrictions on such trade and this has made export control officials increasingly restive.

The recent American decision to cancel the bilateral export control agreement with Japan, thus permitting Tokyo to reduce its controls gradually to match those of other Western countries, has temporarily eased the situation. Japan will await the end of the Geneva conference before requesting a further reduction.

Japan's trade with the Communist bloc is still very small, constituting approximately one percent of its total trade in 1953. Nonstrategic exports to Communist China that year amounted to \$4,500,000, while those to the USSR and Eastern Europe were negligible. Raw material imports from the bloc were valued at: \$29,700,000 from China, mostly coal and food products; \$2,900,000 from the USSR, primarily coal; and \$5,900,000 from East Germany, almost all for fertilizer.

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

American officials in Tokyo estimate that if trade restrictions are lowered to the level maintained by the Western countries, Japan's exports to Communist China will not exceed \$25,000,000 annually. This will still not satisfy popular expectations or recognized needs for foreign trade. Consequently Japanese pressure for the relaxation of China trade controls to the level of those for the rest of the Soviet bloc must be expected.

Pressure for closer relations with the Orbit is also being exerted by nonbusiness groups. An influential nonpartisan repatriation council, Communist front groups, and the Japanese Red Cross are urging the government to permit a Communist Red Cross delegation to visit Japan to facilitate further repatriations from China. In addition a Diet committee has proposed that a mission be sent to Moscow to thank the Russians for the recent return of Japanese and to discuss additional repatriations.

Several Diet members, including many conservatives, are expected to attend a World Peace Council at Stockholm in June, and two plan to visit the USSR and Communist China after the meeting to obtain first-hand information to counter leftist propaganda in Japan. The precedent of government approval of a Diet trade mission to Peiping in 1953 and the official positions of the delegates probably will compel the government to sanction the visit.

~~SECRET~~

14 May 54

SOVIET BLOC INCREASING PROCUREMENT OF MERCHANT SHIPPING FROM WEST*

The Soviet bloc is achieving marked success in its effort to expand its merchant fleet by contracting for construction of ships in Western yards. Western shipyards have already agreed to furnish at least 200,000 gross tons of merchant shipping to the bloc in 1955 and all indications point to substantially larger deliveries in subsequent years.

The minimum total of merchant shipping tonnage to be delivered by Western yards in 1955 amounts to more than one quarter of that to be built on the bloc's own ways that year. Hence the USSR is having a merchant fleet built in the West while utilizing almost all of its own maritime yards for naval construction. The labor represented in these imports is roughly equivalent to that required to build 11 destroyers or 18 submarines.

Western European governments are under strong pressure from shipbuilding interests to seek an easing of existing COCOM regulations governing the export of ships to the Orbit. These regulations are tentatively scheduled for COCOM review on 17 May, when a strong bid will certainly be made by several countries to relax substantially or eliminate completely restrictive quotas on the construction of nonembargo ships.

In 1953, Finland furnished some 80 percent of the 155,000 gross tons of shipping supplied to the bloc by all Western shipyards. In 1955, however, other Western countries will provide almost 60 percent of the Orbit's imports of merchant ships. Moreover, existing bloc trade agreements with Western countries, orders currently being placed in Western yards, and the probable loosening of COCOM controls will substantially raise deliveries after 1955. In addition to its efforts in countries where it has previously placed orders, the Soviet Union signed its first postwar contract early this year for ships from West German yards and is now attempting to place further orders there and in Canada.

Improvement and expansion of the Soviet bloc's relatively small and decrepit merchant fleet, more than half of it over 20 years old, will enhance the bloc's trading capabilities and permit greater peacetime movement of strategic goods from East European ports to China.

*This article is based partially on a study prepared by the Office of Research and Reports.

~~SECRET~~

Next 2 Page(s) In Document Exempt

~~SECRET~~

14 May 54

LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS RENEW CONFLICTS AMONG SOUTH KOREAN CONSERVATIVES

The campaign for the 20 May South Korean National Assembly election is leading to a renewal of the old conflict between President Rhee and his conservative opposition. From Rhee's standpoint a controlled legislature is necessary to achieve unification.

This struggle among the conservatives goes back to the 1952 political crisis, when the assembly sought to unseat Rhee. He then succeeded in stripping the assembly of its power to elect the president and in transferring it to the people. The assembly, however, has continued to block legislation and constitutional amendments which Rhee desires and has prevented him from achieving absolute control.

In the 1950 election, Rhee was unable to control the popular vote sufficiently to ensure a safe legislative majority. Since then he has sought to control the assembly by terrorizing his opposition, seeking new constitutional checks on the legislature, and resorting to extraconstitutional threats of recall, referenda, and dissolution.

Rhee is not impelled solely by a desire for power for its own sake. Rather he is convinced that he alone has a mandate from the people and knows their will. He also believes that his policies, especially on unification, are the only correct ones and must be protected from politicians who would bow to external pressures for a negotiated settlement. In Rhee's eyes his opponents are not only mistaken--they are disloyal, since they would subvert the only "correct" policies for solving Korea's problems.

The opposition Democratic Nationalist Party paper on 28 April stated editorially that Korean unification could be discussed "at other forums, even if Geneva fails." The political orientation and following of another opposition leader, Cho Pong-am, Rhee's leading opponent in the assembly, suggests Cho would favor a "neutralized" Korea. Rhee believes, therefore, he is justified in permitting the police to interfere with Democratic Nationalist Party candidates and in barring Cho--on a registration technicality--from becoming a candidate.

This intimidation of the opposition, plus Rhee's control of the police and his great prestige, especially in rural areas, will be likely to result for the first time in a clear pro-Rhee majority in the new assembly.

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

14 May 54

SOVIET PROPAGANDA GIVES INCREASED ATTENTION TO NUCLEAR SUBJECTS

The recent emphasis of Orbit propaganda media on atomic and hydrogen subjects appears to be primarily a response to American policy statements and nuclear tests in the Pacific. This propaganda apparently has a threefold purpose: (a) to convince the world of Soviet nuclear retaliatory capabilities, (b) to maximize the impact of Soviet disarmament proposals, and (c) to make it politically difficult for the United States to be first to use nuclear weapons in a future war.

Ever since the concept of "instant retaliation" was enunciated by Secretary Dulles on 12 January, Orbit propaganda has belittled what it calls Washington's stress on the necessity of negotiating with the USSR only from a position of strength. In addition to frequent reminders that the Soviet Union also possesses modern nuclear weapons, Communist propaganda has alleged that the policy of "instant retaliation" is designed to keep up the armaments race and ward off an economic crisis. Moscow has also used the Bikini tests to contrast the USSR's "peaceful intentions" with "the irresponsibility of those who would base foreign policy on the use of atomic weapons."

Recent Soviet statements on the USSR's "superior" nuclear capabilities proclaim that the time is past when Washington can use its "super-powerful bombs to intimidate other nations." In election speeches in March, Soviet officials boasted that "the ocean is no longer a reliable defense" for the United States and that the USSR possesses more advanced weapons and techniques of nuclear production than the West. Malenkov stated on 26 April before the Supreme Soviet that "If aggressive circles banking on the atomic weapon should resort to madness and should want to test the strength of the Soviet Union,...the aggressor would be crushed by the same weapon."

Soviet propagandists have attempted to instill confidence at home in the USSR's capabilities. Only a few major official pronouncements and radio commentaries have given graphic descriptions of the aftereffects of nuclear weapons on human beings. A recent series of articles published in the Soviet army paper, Red Star, which described the destructive nature of nuclear weapons, were not given wide dissemination and were presumably designed primarily for the education of the Soviet armed forces.

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

25X1
Unlike their Soviet counterparts, Satellite and Communist propagandists abroad have given extensive attention to a variety of fear-inspiring themes. East Germany has led this campaign,

Other Communist media such as the Spanish clandestine station, Radio Free Japan, Peiping, and Cominform broadcasts to France and Italy have picked up a number of the scare themes. Radio Budapest warned the Turkish audience that radioactivity from a hydrogen bomb exploded over the Baku oilfields would spread over Turkey. Broadcasts of this type appear to be aimed primarily at persuading Western and pro-Western countries to pursue a line more independent of American aims and policies.

Orbit propaganda has constantly harked back to Moscow's proposal of last December for a protocol banning the use of atomic and hydrogen weapons. It has given wide publicity to various groups, Communist and non-Communist, which have demanded such a ban. The most outstanding Communist success along this line was in Italy, where the pope's Easter message calling for the banning of chemical, bacteriological and atomic warfare through international agreements was used to dignify the Communist position. With the creation of this "common ground," the Communists widely publicized their call for Communist-Catholic unity on banning the H-bomb.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

14 May 54

SPECIAL ARTICLE

COMMUNISTS PUSH ARAB "UNITED FRONT"

The Arab Communist parties are becoming increasingly effective as catalysts of discontent and anti-Westernism. For the past six months, Communist activity in the Arab states has been emphasizing the 1952 Soviet Party Congress call for united national fronts. At the Beirut "Congress for the Defense of the Peoples of the Near and Middle East" held in December, propaganda in the area was shifted from "peace" to "defense against colonialism" and to the "protection of national rights."

This change coincided with greater efforts by all Arab Communist parties to join forces with nationalist groups of the right or left. It also seemed to be connected with the return from Moscow in late 1953 of Khalid Bakdash, the leading Communist in the Arab world. Bakdash apparently has a mandate to reorganize the parties and push their alignment with other extremist groups in a "united national front."

The Position of Khalid Bakdash

Bakdash is secretary general of the Syro-Lebanese Communist Party--the oldest, largest and best-organized Communist party in the Arab world. He has spent more time in Moscow than any other Arab Communist leader, and at the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1952, he was reported to have been appointed secretary general of all Communist parties in the Arab states. He is said to receive reports from these parties and supervise the execution of all plans drawn up by Moscow.

25X1 [REDACTED] 1953, it was then expected that Bakdash would return from Moscow with orders to reorganize the Lebanese, Syrian, Iraqi and Jordanian Communist parties. The Syro-Lebanese party is believed to give general direction to the Jordanian party, which receives much Soviet literature from Beirut. In January 1954, Jordanian leaders were reported to have been told that they would receive guidance from Bakdash. He apparently exercises general supervision over the Iraqi party and maintains contact through an exiled Iraqi deputy believed still living in Damascus.

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

14 May 54

SPECIAL ARTICLE

COMMUNISTS PUSH ARAB "UNITED FRONT"

The Arab Communist parties are becoming increasingly effective as catalysts of discontent and anti-Westernism. For the past six months, Communist activity in the Arab states has been emphasizing the 1952 Soviet Party Congress call for united national fronts. At the Beirut "Congress for the Defense of the Peoples of the Near and Middle East" held in December, propaganda in the area was shifted from "peace" to "defense against colonialism" and to the "protection of national rights."

This change coincided with greater efforts by all Arab Communist parties to join forces with nationalist groups of the right or left. It also seemed to be connected with the return from Moscow in late 1953 of Khalid Bakdash, the leading Communist in the Arab world. Bakdash apparently has a mandate to reorganize the parties and push their alignment with other extremist groups in a "united national front."

The Position of Khalid Bakdash

Bakdash is secretary general of the Syro-Lebanese Communist Party--the oldest, largest and best-organized Communist party in the Arab world. He has spent more time in Moscow than any other Arab Communist leader, and at the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1952, he was reported to have been appointed secretary general of all Communist parties in the Arab states. He is said to receive reports from these parties and supervise the execution of all plans drawn up by Moscow.

25X1 [REDACTED] 1953, it was then expected that Bakdash would return from Moscow with orders to reorganize the Lebanese, Syrian, Iraqi and Jordanian Communist parties. The Syro-Lebanese party is believed to give general direction to the Jordanian party, which receives much Soviet literature from Beirut. In January 1954, Jordanian leaders were reported to have been told that they would receive guidance from Bakdash. He apparently exercises general supervision over the Iraqi party and maintains contact through an exiled Iraqi deputy believed still living in Damascus.

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

The Situation of the Arab Parties

The Arab parties have only about 48,000 members out of a population of 30,000,000. All the parties are outlawed. Organizationally, they are very weak; their leadership is generally ineffective, and where effective, is overworked. Ideologically, they have no firm foundation in the area, but remain most popular with the disgruntled intellectuals and the ethnic and religious minorities so numerous in the Arab world. There has never been any effective coordination among these parties.

In Syria, Bakdash initiated a reorganization of the Communist Party and a resurgence of Communist activity which were subsequently facilitated by the reappearance of political freedom following the overthrow of Shishakli. Bakdash is now directing a campaign to organize a front with the Arab Socialist-Resurrectionist Party for the elections to be held in July. The Communist election line stresses the need for "a national union" of all Syrians for the establishment of a parliamentary, republican, democratic government. Radio Moscow, which usually avoids any discussion of local Arab Communist activities, broadcast Bakdash's call for such a union. This is the first publicity given by Moscow to an offer by a Middle East Communist party to support a national, democratic government.

In Jordan, the Communists have been particularly successful in linking up with other groups in the exploitation of popular issues. The Communists are staging demonstrations, conducting letter-writing campaigns and promoting petitions on behalf of Arab refugees, Tunisian nationalists, and Jordanian political detainees. Communist efforts to form a national

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

front are aimed at the expulsion of Anglo-American influence from the Arab world and have been a significant factor in making the Jordanian government responsive to extremist public opinion.

In Iraq, the Communists are marshaling all their strength and cooperating with other nationalist parties in an attempt to prevent Iraq from joining the Turkish-Pakistani pact. The

25X1



In Lebanon, the Communist Party has recently shown a tendency to avoid strictly partisan issues and to throw all its pressure behind issues commonly supported by other antigovernment forces. Unrestrained Communist agitation, particularly on the occasion of the recent anti-Western disturbances at the American University of Beirut, has so frightened Lebanese politicians that they have rallied to the support of Prime Minister Yafi's government to protect it from Communist and radical subversion. Yafi has been so alarmed by the situation that he has requested American advice and equipment in developing a program for controlling street disturbances.

25X1

Moscow is not likely to have much immediate success in transforming the Arab Communist parties into disciplined class instruments. The parties are, however, becoming increasingly successful in exploiting nationalist ambitions to the damage of Western objectives in the area.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~